

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SOURCE:

1. The Ministry of Fish Industry is located at 15 Gedimino Street in Vilnius. A branch office is located on Turgaus Street in Klaipeda. The head of the ministry in Vilnius is Mickevicius (fnu). The Chief of the Planning Section is Villamas (fnu). Other positions in the ministry include the first and second deputies, chairman of the Fishermen's Union, chief of the bookkeeping section, ministry engineer, ministry inspector, and personnel officer. The work of the Lithuanian Ministry of Fish Industry is directed by Moscow, which decides the percentage of fish to be exported and the percentage which can be retained for use by the inhabitants. There is also a Fishing Trust, which has the same sections as the Ministry of Fish Industry and is under its supervision. Also under the supervision of the Ministry of Fish Industry is the Fishermen's Union. The Fishing Trust differs from the fishing artels in that the former uses fishing trawlers.
2. The fishermen of Klaipeda were combined into artels in 1948-1949. There are 12 fishing artels in the Klaipeda area, including those in Svetoji, Giruliai, Smiltynė (55-43N, 21-06E), Nida (55-18N, 21-01E), Kintai (55-25N, 21-17E), Juodkrante (55-33N, 21-08E), and Preilai (55-22N, 21-04E). There are also several river and lake fishermen artels. All these are supervised by the artel administration in Svetoji. An artel has the following officials: chairman, deputy chairman, chief bookkeeper, bookkeeper, cashier, storekeeper, driver, and six brigadiers. The chairman of the Banga artel in Klaipeda is the fisherman Kurmis (fnu). His predecessor was Tydekas (fnu), who resigned in 1950 because of old age. Tydekas, a non-Communist Lithuanian, received the Order of the Red Banner for having established the Fishermen's Union.

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3. Each artel brigade consists of 12 fishermen, at least ten of whom have to work the net. Each brigade also has two small rowboats and four of the artel fishermen go out in each. The boats are very old and leaky and none of them has a motor. Fishermen must stay within sight of the coast. They are allowed to go 10 to 15 kilometers out to sea. Those cutters of the Fishermen's Trust which are commanded by Russian officers or which have Russians as part of their crews do not have to obey this order. In practice, however, even they can always be seen from the shore and usually go out a distance of about 25 nautical miles.
4. The fishermen are paid very low prices for the fish they deliver in comparison with the retail price of fish. Examples of these prices include the following:

	<u>Delivery Price in rubles per kg.</u>	<u>Retail Price in rubles per kg.</u>
Codfish	0.65	3.50
Flounder	0.75 to 0.95	3.90
Herring	1.20	6.50
Smelt	0.95	5.20
<u>Zaerte</u>	1.10	3.60
Eel	12.00	25.00

Herring is the best blackmarket commodity.

5. When the fish are weighed, the so-called water weight (vandens svoris) is deducted. This amounts to about 20 percent of the total weight. Fishermen in the artel receive 70 percent of the monetary value of the fish caught. Of the other 30 percent, five percent goes for the support of the artel administration and 25 percent is added to the account of the fishermen's cultural fund. From this fund, the following expenses are paid: artel losses, new nets, establishment of kindergartens, etc. If any money remains in the cultural fund at the end of the year, it is divided in equal parts among the fishermen.
6. Under the present conditions in Klaipeda, fishing is the only really profitable profession. Fishermen receive special premiums when they catch more than the planned amount of fish. A fisherman can officially earn up to 2,300 rubles per month. An ordinary worker would have to work five months or longer to earn this amount. Moreover, the fishing artels have special accounts in the bank, from which they can draw their wage payments every ten days. Thus, fishermen do not have to wait for their pay as regular workers do. Source believes that a fisherman would not even change positions with a factory director, since not only is the fisherman's financial situation very good, but he is also well provided with food and clothing. Monthly wages of artel officials are as follows: chairman, 1,000 rubles; bookkeeper, 300 to 600 rubles; cashier, 250 rubles; driver, 250 rubles. Brigadiers are paid like the fishermen (70 percent of the value of the fish caught divided equally among them) plus an additional two percent for their services as brigadiers.
7. In 1945-1946, the norm per fisherman was set at 20 tons of fish per year. Because norms were over-fulfilled several times each year, minimum yearly norms were increased in 1947-1948 to 175 tons. If the plan assigned to the artel is not accomplished, the chairman has to pay a fine of up to 400 rubles. There is a Japanese fishing net laid at the north breakwater. It is 500 meters long and about 250 meters wide. Its daily catch is about 200 tons of fish and local fishermen believe this method will result in quick exhaustion of the supply.
8. Even in Klaipeda, not much fresh fish can be bought. The best fish are sent to smokehouses and from there are delivered to restaurants and dining rooms. Most of the delivered fish is later canned. Canning factories are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Fish Industry, not under the Ministry of Industry (sic). The canneries are working at full speed. The Ministry of Fish Industry sends part of the canned fish to government trade channels and the largest part to Moscow for export. The latter part is provided with Russian labels and is exported to other countries occupied by the Soviets. The price of canned fish is so high that an average worker cannot afford to buy it. For example, 250 grams of canned codfish cost 10.50 rubles.

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